

It Was His Only Link with Rewald

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Zobel Presses Quest for New Polo Site

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There will be polo after Ronald R. Rewald, but it won't be quite the same.

Polo players are losing their polo grounds to an insurance company and have lost their club name to Rewald.

With the help of international figures such as Philippines Banker Enrique Zobel and the Sultan of Brunei, local polo players and supporters hope to soon find a new location to play the game.

They also will have to find a new name since Rewald is legal owner of the name, Hawaii Polo Club, according to Robert MacGregor, Hawaii's self-described "senior polo player."

MacGregor said yesterday a search has begun because the

lease on the Mokuleia property, owned by Northwestern Mutual Life, runs out this year. The insurance company has told the polo players that it cannot renew the lease on the grounds because it plans development in the area.

However, the move from Mokuleia to another site would have occurred even if Rewald had not taken over the club.

Zobel, a billionaire and a former polo champion, is one of Hawaii's top polo boosters even though he is not a resident, polo players have said.

He began searching for a new location for the grounds as soon it became obvious that there would be no more play at Mokuleia next year, MacGregor said.

WHEN ZOBEL found out that Rewald, who bought the club's

name last year, also was looking for a site, he decided to join Rewald in the search for a new location so they would not duplicate each others efforts, MacGregor said.

The result was the formation of Ayala Hawaii Corp., a corporation which listed Zobel and Rewald as directors.

When Rewald's company — Bishop, Baldwin, Rewald, Dillingham & Wong — was forced into bankruptcy, Ayala Hawaii Corp. attracted the attention of a number of people who may have concluded that Rewald and Zobel had bigger business plans than just the development of a polo site.

Zobel could not be reached for comment this week.

But Zobel's associate Tomas Gomez, in a recent interview, said

the entire purpose of the corporation was to find a site for polo.

In fact, Gomez said, Zobel agreed to help find a polo site with Rewald, though Zobel suspected that Rewald's company was not everything it claimed to be.

"Right from the start, he was very suspicious," Gomez said of Zobel's perception of Rewald. "Any prudent man, shorn of greed, would have taken a second look at Rewald's company."

But because Rewald officially represented polo in Hawaii, Zobel had to deal with him in the search for the polo site, Gomez said.

GOMEZ SCOFFED at any suggestion that Zobel would have business dealings with Rewald. As a seasoned banker who under-

stood high finance, Zobel was "one person" who could not be taken by Rewald," Gomez said.

In fact, Zobel went out of his way to convince his closest polo-playing friend in Hawaii, Tommy Campos, to withdraw the \$135,000 Campos had invested in Bishop, Baldwin, Rewald, Dillingham & Wong, Gomez said. Zobel also aided Campos' sister in withdrawing money from the company.

Flor Martinez, public information officer for the Philippine Consulate here, said he did not think Zobel's reputation in the Philippines has been hurt by his brief association with Rewald.

Martinez said the consulate officials obtained a copy of Ayala Hawaii Corp. incorporation records and were satisfied that the corporation was entirely legal.

Asked why the consulate wanted the corporation documents, Martinez said: "We were just curious."

Gomez also said he did not think Zobel had been hurt by his association with Rewald.

"He is like a rock in the Philippines," Gomez said.

Although Ayala Hawaii Corp. is now being dissolved, the search for a polo site is continuing.

MacGregor said several sites are being considered, but that it will be a few weeks before the informal committee of polo players makes a decision.

Although Rewald is no longer responsible for the move of polo from Mokuleia to a new site, his short but notable involvement in the club may be remembered for years when polo fans remember the "good old days" at Mokuleia.